

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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HOY: UNEMPLOYMENT BACKLOG IS UNACCEPTABLE

INDIANAPOLIS – State Rep. Phil Hoy (D-Evansville) said the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) has a backlog of at least 20,000 unemployment claims, a problem that originated when DWD Commissioner Ron Stiver decided to drastically cut the number of people handling claims.

“Commissioner Stiver moved claims deputies from districts such as Evansville and consolidated the operation in Indianapolis,” Hoy said. “When he consolidated, he took the work of 120 people and gave it to 41. Is there any wonder that the state is so far behind now?”

“People who depend on their unemployment checks now have to wait at least six weeks, instead of the three it normally takes to process them,” he added. “One of our state senators said she was contacted by a person who had to wait 13 weeks.”

The U.S. Department of Labor’s “desired level of achievement” for responding to unemployment claims is 20 days.

“This is an intolerable situation,” Hoy said. “These families are facing mortgage payments, utility bills and doctor’s bills, yet they are getting behind because of a bad decision made by a Daniels administration appointee. I call upon the governor to intervene and take care of this backlog so Hoosiers who have lost their jobs do not suffer needlessly. A good starting point would be to put claims deputies back in regional offices where they can best serve the needs of our state’s citizens.”

Hoy said the state delays could cause the U.S. Department of Labor to withhold unemployment insurance tax credits which Hoosier businesses now receive. The withholding of credits would force businesses to pay millions of dollars more in unemployment insurance tax.

Those waiting for their unemployment claims are urged to call Commissioner Stiver at 317-232-5661 and Governor Daniels at 317-232-4567.

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